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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BLM PLANS TO START FALL BURNING PROJECTS

MISSOULA (September 20, 2005) – The Missoula Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management plans to start its fall burning projects as soon as weather conditions allow, possibly as early as September 21. Depending on weather, burning will take place sporadically through October.

“We plan to use prescribed fire to reduce the amount of vegetation to a more historic level in two areas,” stated Shelagh Fox, fuels specialist.

One of the areas is near Ninemile Prairie in the Lower Blackfoot River corridor about five miles north of Potomac. Fox expects the burn to take two to three days to complete the 42-acre treatment with fire fighters using drip torches.

The second area is in the Elk Creek drainage, near Kennedy and Keno Creeks, approximately 10 miles east of Potomac. Fire fighters will use drip torches to burn concentrations of vegetation in the 125-acre area.

The objective for both areas is to create intermittent openings in the timber and remove the smaller “ladder” fuels to reduce the risk of large, catastrophic wild fires. The burns will also stimulate shrub growth to improve big game winter range and create a fuel break to help protect structures in the wildland urban interface area.

If you have questions or need more information about the burns, contact Shelagh Fox or Katie Albritton at the Missoula Field Office, 329-3914.